

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ERDA-07

AID-05 CEA-01 CIEP-02 COME-00 EB-07 FPC-01 INT-05

OMB-01 SAM-01 OES-05 STR-04 TRSE-00 FRB-01 FEA-01

USIE-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 IO-10 AF-06 ARA-10

EA-10 NEA-09 /138 W

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O 092104Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8328

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 08979

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCON, ENRG

SUBJ: EXCERPTS OF UNDER SECRETARY ROBINSON'S
BACKGROUNDERS BEFORE U.S. PRESS APRIL 7, 1975

1. THE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM UNDER SECRETARY ROBINSON'S APRIL 7 BACKGROUNDERS TO THE U.S. PRESS. PORTIONS WHICH ARE ON THE RECORD ARE SO IDENTIFIED.

2. FULL TRANSCRIPT OF BACKGROUNDERS WILL BE
POUCHED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Q: IS IT FAIR TO SAY FROM WHAT YOU HAVE SAID THAT
IT IS NO LONGER A GOAL OF THE U.S. TO BREAK THE
CARTEL -- TO USE THE CLICHE -- AS SOON AS POSSIBLE?

A: I WOULD LIKE TO GO "ON THE RECORD" FOR THIS BE-
CAUSE THERE IS A LOT OF MISUNDERSTANDING OVER OUR
POSITION. I WANT TO MAKE IT VERY CLEAR THAT WE
ARE NOT OUT TO DESTROY OPEC. WE CLEARLY ARE HERE
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TO WORK WITH THE NATIONS -- FOUR OF WHICH ARE

MEMBERS OF OPEC -- IN A COOPERATIVE, CONSTRUCTIVE WAY TO DEAL WITH OUR COMMON ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. THAT IS OUR OBJECTIVE. WE WANT COOPERATION AND WE WANT TO WORK TOGETHER. AND I WANT TO MAKE IT VERY CLEAR THAT OUR DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN FRIENDLY, THEY HAVE BEEN OF A POSITIVE THRUST AND WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER TO DEAL WITH OUR PROBLEMS WITHOUT ANY INTENT OR OBJECTIVE OF TRYING TO DESTROY OPEC.

Q: NOW, MR. ROBINSON, THERE WAS A DIFFERENCE IMPLIED IN THE STATEMENT THAT WAS MADE FOR THE BRITISH TELEVISION BY ASST. SECRETARY ENDERS, IN WHICH HE SAID THAT OUR POLICY WAS AIMED AT HASTENING THE DEMISE OF THE CARTEL.

A: AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THE COMMENTS THAT WERE IN THE PRESS WAS TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT. IT WAS DEALING WITH A HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION. THE QUESTION -- I HAVE NOT READ THE FULL TEXT --, BUT IT IS CLEAR THAT THE COMMENTS THAT WERE MADE WERE DEALING WITH OUR INTEREST IN SEEING A FREER MARKET, A FREER PLAY AT MARKET FORCES. BUT CLEARLY THAT IS NOT INTENDED NOR IS IT U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY TO SEEK THE DESTRUCTION OF OPEC.

Q: MR. ROBINSON, I'M SORRY, BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOUR POSITION ON OPEC. YOU ARE WILLING TO SEE THE OIL CARTEL CONTINUE TO FUNCTION -- IS THAT RIGHT? THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT WANT THE OIL CARTEL BROKEN UP.

A: I THINK THE U.S. CLEARLY WOULD LIKE TO SEE OIL PRICES ESTABLISHED BY SUPPLY AND DEMAND IN A NORMAL WAY.

Q: BUT THEN THE U.S. WOULD WANT TO SEE THE OIL CARTEL BROKEN UP.

A: I DON'T -- ADDITIONALLY, THE - YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT U.S. GOVERNMENT AT THIS POINT -- THIS, MAY I TAKE THIS OFF THE RECORD, BECAUSE I WANT TO EXPLAIN THE BACKGROUND FOR MY STATEMENT. WE ARE DEDICATED TO A COURSE OF CONSTRUCTIVE, MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE WITH OPEC, WITH NO INTENT TO DESTROY IT OR BREAK IT APART.

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Q: BUT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE IT BREAK APART.

A: THIS IS A DIFFICULT QUESTION. THIS IS BACKGROUND ISN'T IT?

Q: A MINUTE AGO YOU SAID IT WAS OFF THE RECORD, SIR.

A: THIS IS OFF THE RECORD.

Q: THAT MEANS THEY CAN'T USE IT AT ALL.

Q: YOU WANT IT UNATTRIBUTABLE, HOW IS THAT?

A: ALL RIGHT. I'LL RECONSIDER WHAT I WAS GOING TO SAY. THIS IS A MOST DIFFICULT QUESTION, BECAUSE TO THE EXTENT .. I'M GOING TO HAVE TO RE-PHASE THAT .. WE ARE CLEARLY DEDICATED TO FINDING A WAY TO WORK WITH OPEC, AND TO WORK WITH THEM CONSTRUCTIVELY. WE HAVE NO PLANS, AND THERE IS NO EFFORT TO BREAK THEM APART. BUT THE QUICKEST WAY TO BUILD SOLIDARITY IN OPEC IS TO CONFRONT THEM. NOW, WE FEEL THAT OUR GOAL IS ONE OF

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O 092104Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8329

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 08979

MAXIMIZING THE EXTENT TO WHICH WE CAN WORK COOPERATIVELY AND CONSTRUCTIVELY WITH OPEC AND THE INDIVIDUAL NATIONS THEY REPRESENT.

Q: I STILL DON'T THINK YOU'VE ANSWERED MY QUESTION. WOULD THE UNITED STATES LIKE TO SEE THE OIL CARTEL BROKEN UP?

A: YOU'VE GOT 250 MILLION PEOPLE IN THE UNITED

STATES, AND ...

Q: GOVERNMENT POLICY.

A: GOVERNMENT POLICY IS ONE OF WANTING THE MARKET PRICE FOR OIL SET BY THE FREE PLAY OF MARKET FORCES.

Q: NOT BY THE CARTEL.

Q: IS THIS POSSIBLE AS LONG AS YOU HAVE 13 COUNTRIES PRODUCING 85 PER CENT OF THE WORLD'S EXPORT OIL ACTING IN CONCERT TO SET THE PRICE? I MEAN, THERE'S A CONTRADICTION THERE, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?

Q: MR. SECRETARY, ARE YOU SAYING THAT YOU DON'T UNCLASSIFIED

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LIKE OPEC BUT ARE ACCEPTING IT AS A FAIT ACCOMPLI? IS THAT WHAT IT BOILS DOWN TO?

A: I'M NOT SAYING I DON'T LIKE OPEC. I'M SAYING THAT THAT REALLY ISN'T AN ISSUE IN OUR PRESENT POLICY. OUR PRESENT POLICY IS TO DEAL CONSTRUCTIVELY AND COOPERATIVELY WITH THE MEMBERS OF OPEC.

Q: BUT U.S. POLICY IN THE PAST HAS BEEN THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE MARKET FORCES SET THE PRICE AND NOT THE OIL CARTEL, THAT'S ALL I'M ASKING YOU. IS THAT STILL THE U.S. POLICY? OR ARE YOU SAYING THAT IT IS NO LONGER U.S. POLICY, THAT YOU ARE WILLING TO LIVE WITH OPEC SETTING THE PRICES?

A: I THINK THE CARTEL IS INFLUENCING PRICES TODAY, BUT THERE ARE PRICEMOVEMENTS THAT ARE NOT.. THAT ARE RESPONDING TO MARKET FORCES NOW.

Q: IN OTHER WORDS YOU'RE SAYING YOU'RE WILLING TO LIVE WITH A WEAK OPEC, BUT NOT A STRONG ONE.

A: IT'S A DIFFICULT QUESTION, BECAUSE THERE IS NO WAY THAT YOU CAN CONFRONT OPEC AND DO ANYTHING BUT SOLIDIFY IT.

Q: YOU'D LIKE TO SEE "UN-SOLID" OPEC?

A: I'M SAYING I WANT TO SEE A COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP DEVELOP WITH THE MEMBERS OF OPEC, DEALING WITH THEIR INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMS IN A COOPERATIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE WAY.

Q: WHEN YOU SAY THAT THE U.S. DOES NOT SEEK TO DESTROY OPEC, THAT DOES NOT MEAN YOU WOULDN'T BE HAPPY IF OPEC DISAPPEARED TOMORROW?

A: WE DON'T SET POLICY ON WHAT WE LIKE OR DISLIKE, WE SET IT ON THE BASIS OF WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO, AND OUR POLICY IS TO WORK COOPERATIVELY AND CONSTRUCTIVELY WITH THE MEMBERS OF OPEC.

Q: SO IT IS NOT THE U.S. POLICY TO SEEK TO DESTROY OPEC?

A: IT IS NOT OUR POLICY TO SEEK TO DESTROY OPEC, THAT'S RIGHT.

Q: DO YOU ALSO AGREE WITH WHAT I SAID IN THE

BEGINNING?

A: WITH RESERVATIONS, I DO. I DON'T THINK THAT
WE HAVE AS A MATTER OF POLICY A DETERMINATION TO
DESTROY OPEC.
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Q: WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE OPEC GO BACK TO WHAT IT
WAS BEFORE IT BEGAN TO SET OIL PRICES?

A: YOU MEAN WHEN IT WAS INEFFECTIVE.

(LAUGHTER)

Q: ISN'T IT A QUESTION OF TACTICS AND GOALS?
YOUR TACTIC IS NOT TO CONFRONT THEM AND YOUR GOAL
IS TO HAVE MARKET FORCES PREVAIL AGAIN.

A: WE THINK THAT IN THE LONG RUN IT'S IN EVERY-
ONE'S BEST INTERESTS THAT THE MARKET ESTABLISH
THE PRICE.

Q: THEN YOU DON'T HAVE A CARTEL.

A: EH, YOU HAVE DIFFERENT KINDS OF CARTELS.

Q: WE USED TO HAVE SEVEN SISTERS.

(LAUGHTER)

Q: (UNCLEAR. BASICALLY ASKS IF WE OPPOSE DIS-
CUSSING OTHER COMMODITIES BECAUSE OTHERS MAY TAKE
EXAMPLE FROM OPEC AND FORM MORE CARTELS.)

A: THERE ISN'T ANYTHING IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH
ANY OF THE DELEGATIONS THAT ARE HERE AT THIS
MEETING THAT WOULD LEAD US TO THE CONCLUSION THAT
THAT IS WHAT THEY ARE PLANNING. THEY REALLY ARE
SEEKING A NEW KIND OF RELATIONSHIP TO MEET SOME
OF THE CTICAL PROBLEMS, AND ONE OF THE PROBLEMS
IS PRICE VOLATILITY.....

(END OF QUESTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT)

RUSH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ENERGY, PETROLEUM, POLICIES, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975PARIS08979
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750123-0870
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750467/aaaacjnc.tel
Line Count: 259
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 JUN 2003 by RuthemTJ>; APPROVED <11 FEB 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EXCERPTS OF UNDER SECRETARY ROBINSON'S BACKGROUNDER BEFORE U.S. PRESS APRIL 7, 1975
TAGS: OCON, ENRG, FR, US, (ROBINSON)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006